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AUTHOR YUKER, HAROLD E.
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ABSTRACT

THIS STUDY COMPARES THE PERFORMANCES OF TEAM-TAUGHT, EXPERIMENTAL CURRICULUM CLASSES ("EXPERIMENTAL GROUP") WITH THE INDIVIDUALLY-TAUGHT TRADITIONAL CURRICULUM CLASSES ("CONTROL GROUP") ON 3 SUB-TESTS OF THE COOPERATIVE ENGLISH TEST. THE SUB-TESTS SELECTED WERE: GRAMMATICAL USAGE, PUNCTUATION AND CAPITALIZATION, AND SENTENCE STRUCTURE. PRE- AND POST-TESTS WERE ADMINISTERED IN ALL CLASSES. TEST RESULTS SHOWED THE 2 GROUPS WERE MATCHED ON ALL EXCEPT THE PUNCTUATION AND CAPITALIZATION SUB-TESTS IN WHICH THE EXPERIMENTAL GROUP SCORED SIGNIFICANTLY HIGHER ON BOTH THE PRE- AND POST-TESTS, THOUGH BOTH GROUPS SUBSTANTIALLY INCREASED THEIR SCORES ON THESE TESTS. SOME TENTATIVE CONCLUSIONS WERE: (1) THE LACK OF DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE EXPERIMENTAL AND CONTROL CLASSES IN ACQUISITION OF SKILLS TESTED (I.E. IN POST-TEST SCORES) INDICATES THAT THE EXPERIMENTAL TEACHING METHOD AND CURRICULUM WERE NEITHER BETTER NOR WORSE THAN THE CONTROL TEACHING METHOD AND CURRICULUM; AND (2) SCORES ON THE OBJECTIVE TESTS WERE MORE CLOSELY RELATED TO ASSIGNMENT OF COURSE GRADES IN THE CONTROL GROUP THAN IN THE EXPERIMENTAL GROUP. (AF)

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A COMPARISON OF THE PERFORMANCES OF TEAM-TAUGHT AND INDIVIDUALLY-TAUGHT CLASSES IN FRESHMAN ENGLISH

Dr. Harold E. Yuker

Director, Instructional Research

Graduate Assistants:

David Fishken
Edgar O'Neal

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

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As requested by the English Department, an investigation of the effects of "team teaching" with experimental curriculum upon Freshman English classes has been carried out. The study compared the performances of team-taught, experimental curriculum classes ("experimental group") with the individually-taught, traditional curriculum classes ("control group") on three subtests of the Cooperative English Test (C-2Y). The subtests selected by members of the English Department for use in the comparison were: grammatical usage, punctuation and capitalization, and sentence structure.

The course content of the control classes was an approach to writing through literature (text used: Short Stories for Study); and for the experimental classes, approach to writing through rhetoric (text used: The Province of Prose). Two classes were taught individually using the experimental course material but were excluded from this analysis because of the small number of students in these classes present at both testing sessions. The initial or pre-tests were administered to the Freshman English classes on October 19 and 22, 1965, and the second or post-tests, on January 10 and 12, 1966.

A summary of the test results is presented in table 1. In comparisons of the experimental and control groups, the statistical concept of "significance" is used. Significance indicates the probability that the observed differences did not occur merely by chance. When a difference is reported in

the table as being significant at the .01 level, it indicates that a difference of this magnitude could be attributable to chance only one percent of the time, and consequently, the difference is probably not due to chance. Where "NS" appears in the tables, it indicates that significance did not reach the .05 level.

The differences between the experimental and control groups are indicated in column 3 of table 1, and the significance of the differences in column 4. These results indicate that the two groups were matched on all except the punctuation and capitalization subtest. In this subtest the experimental group scored significantly higher on both the pre- and post-tests than did the control group. Because of the initial inequality between the groups as reflected in the punctuation and capitalization pre-test scores, the interpretation of the post-test differences between the groups (column 4, row 6) is necessarily limited.

The differences between the pre- and post-tests are indicated in rows 3, 7, and 11; the significance of these differences, in rows 4, 8, and 12. Looking at the significance of the differences, it is found that only the differences on the punctuation and capitalization subtest reached significance. This indicates that on this test there was an improvement from pre- to post-test that was significantly greater than chance. On the tests of grammatical usage and sentence structure, however, even though there was some improvement in average scores, the differences were not so great as to be attributed to other than chance.

Table 1

Experimental and Control Pre- and Post-Test Differences

			1 Experimental (N=81)	2 Control (N=132)	3 Difference	4 Significance
Grammatical Usage	1	Pre	43.88	42.82	1.06	NS
	2	Post	45.83	44.60	1.23	NS
	3	Diff.	1.95	1.78		
	4	Sig.	NS	NS		
Punctuation and Capitalization	5	Pre	55.56	50.53	5.03	.01
	6	Post	58.31	55.39	2.93	.05
	7	Diff.	2.75	4.86		
	8	Sig.	.01	.05		
Sentence Structure	9	Pre	11.26	11.32	.06	NS
	10	Post	11.54	11.73	.19	NS
	11	Diff.	.38	.41		
	12	Sig.	NS	NS		

Correlations between students' course grades and their scores on the post-tests were computed and the results are presented in table 2. Although none of the correlations were very high, the course grades correlated more highly with test grades for the students in the control classes than for the students in the experimental classes. These results would seem to indicate that proficiency in the skills measured by these tests was more highly valued by the teachers in the control group.

The average course grade for the experimental group was 2.36, which was significantly higher (at the .05 level) than the average grade of 1.99 for the control group. This indicates that even though the two groups were not significantly different on two of the objective tests, the students in the experimental classes were given higher grades. This difference in grading between the experimental and control groups might be related, in part, to the experimental group's superior performance on the punctuation and capitalization subtests, or it might be due to other factors.

Even though the experimental and control groups were not matched in their level of writing ability as measured by the punctuation and capitalization pre-test, some tentative conclusions can be drawn:

1. For both the experimental and control groups, results indicate a significant increase in punctuation and capitalization test scores.
2. The lack of differences between the experimental and

Table 2

Correlations Between Post-Test Scores and Course Grades

Between:	Control Group		Experimental Group		Significance of Differences
	Coefficient	Significance	Coefficient	Significance	
Grammatical Usage and Final Grades	.66	.001	.33	.01	.001
Punctuation and Capitalization and Final Grades	.58	.001	.39	.01	.05
Sentence Structure and Final Grades	.59	.001	.25	.05	.001

control classes in acquisition of skills tested (i.e., in post-test scores) indicates that the experimental teaching method and curriculum were neither better nor worse than the control teaching method and curriculum.

3. Scores on the objective tests were more closely related to assignment of course grades in the control group than in the experimental group.